

FREMONT BOARD OF SELECTMEN**31 JANUARY 2008****APPROVED 02/07/2008**

At 6:10 pm the Board's meeting was called to order in the basement meeting room at the Town Hall. Present were Selectmen Gene Cordes, Peter Bolduc, and Donald Gates Jr; and Town Administrator Heidi Carlson.

Selectmen reviewed the meeting agenda. Selectmen reviewed mail items and other correspondence.

Scott Nichols of Carol Shea-Porter's Office had scheduled an appointment for 6:10 pm to discuss current federal initiatives, but did not appear for the meeting.

OLD BUSINESS

1. Selectmen reviewed the minutes for 24 January 2008. Bolduc moved to approve the minutes as written. Gates seconded and the vote was unanimously approved 3-0.
2. Selectmen would like to plan to meet with Barry Cox of LGC sometime in March to see the final wage study. The Budget Committee had made it clear a few weeks ago that they did not want to consider the changes that could be imposed by the study this year because it had not come early enough in the budget process. The Board is anxious to have it come to resolution and will bring it to the Budget Committee as soon as the study is completed.

Peter Bearse came into the meeting at 6:30 pm.

3. Selectmen did a detailed warrant article review and spent considerable time discussing the 2008 warrant and beginning of the draft of the Warrant Article Narrative for the Town Report. Each article was reviewed for content.

The cable expendable trust fund article was increased to \$4,000 to ensure we could use any funds received in calendar year 2008. The estimate for a full year approximately \$6,000.

The Board decided that the question to establish town officer salaries for 2008 would be placed in the warrant in greater detail. The information will be put into a table listing the position, current salary or stipend; and the 2008 Selectmen recommended salary/stipend and the 2008 Budget Committee recommended salary/stipend. This expansion of the article helps to include the wishes of the Budget Committee last night.

Gates said that the Budget Committee was also looking to have the full amount of funding associated with the office in the schedule, and not an hourly rate. This would pertain to the amount listed for the Deputy Town Clerk and the Supervisors of Checklist.

Carlson discussed establishing a table in this article to include each of these columns. Selectmen thought that any other benefit "package" that was part of a compensation plan should also be included. The Board supported putting this in as article 7 and moving the master budget article to article 8.

Selectmen discussed budget line items as recommended by the Budget Committee and decided to amend some of their recommendations, to avoid unneeded funds being appropriated if the Selectmen's recommended operating budget was voted at Town Meeting. This included the reduction of \$2,000 in the Fire Department budget for a computer already purchased, and \$100 in the Emergency Management budget for one month of the year gone by, in which there was no Director. This reduces the Selectmen's recommendation of the operating budget by \$2,100. Additionally an error was found in the recommendation for the Planning and Zoning clerical position and as shown would reflect a decrease in

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pay. The Selectmen's budget was corrected to \$31,668 and the Budget Committee number would need to be corrected to \$30,763.

The warrant as revised needs to be sent to Town Counsel and to DRA for a final review.

4. Selectmen were provided the short versions of the budget report for 2007 and 2008 for review. Revenues are currently being prepared as well, and these forms will be used, with the warrant, for the public hearing next Wednesday. The Selectmen discussed reducing their recommendation in the Fire Department budget and Emergency Management by \$2,000 and \$100 respectively, because it is funds not needed in 2008. The Fire Department already purchased a computer, and the EM stipend was reduced because there was no one in the position for the month of January 2008.

5. Selectmen discussed additional follow-up from Jay Somers. It included the following information received yesterday:

Fremont Franchise Related Cost

\$5,000 *Equipment Grant. Average Franchise Related Cost (FRC) to Fremont customers for 1 full year: 0.06 per subscriber*

\$26,436 *Return Line from Fremont Town Hall to the Exeter Head-end. Average Franchise Related Cost (FRC) to Fremont customers for 10 years: 0.29 per subscriber*

\$47,700 *to re-engineer the following Fremont locations to receive the Fremont access channel; Midnight Sun Drive, Pulaski Drive, Treaty Court and Dakota Drive. Average Franchise Related Cost (FRC) to Fremont customers for 10 years: 0.47 per subscriber*

\$10,000 *to extend cable to the remaining six homes on Old Ridge Road. Average Franchise Related Cost (FRC) to Fremont customers for 1 year: 0.13 per subscriber*

Fremont Franchise Fee

One half percent (1/2%) of total gross revenues for the 1st full year of the renewal license is estimated to be \$6,000. The average franchise fee to Fremont customers: 0.40 per subscriber

Note: The average cost per customer as it is related to the FRC is dependent on the number of Fremont customers.

The average cost to Fremont customers as it is related to the Franchise Fee is calculated on the amount of the Cable TV services a customer subscribes to.

Selectmen had asked if there was a way to pre-fund the equipment so that it would be up and running sooner rather than later. Somers reported back that they can, but it would come out of the costs as soon as they were received. (The Town would get less franchise fee initially).

At 7:00 pm no Department Heads were present.

If it is a community channel, than everyone should have access to it. Approximately 70 homes do not currently have access to Comcast (Fremont) channel 22 because their feed for cable service is wired

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through feeds in Raymond or Sandown. Somers has indicated that this is not a poles and wires setup (Raymond and Sandown feed). This is an equipment issue, so it becomes a matter of technology, and not replacement of poles and wires.

There are also between six and ten additional homes that have no cable service on Old Ridge Road. Cordes said this is a ten year contract and this is our one chance to get it taken care of. If not, it will sit in its current state for the next ten years.

Bearse said that the Board does not have the information to know if the people who are not currently wired have any interest in it, or if they would choose to have cable at all, or have the Fremont feed if it was offered. There was not any discussion about this, or feedback during the public hearing processes (from those who do not have cable, or those who have the alternate feed).

Bearse talked about other sources of competition and that they are largely-technology dependent and will be wireless. The Town would have not control over the wireless components because the Town's only authority is the pole and wire issue.

A side letter will be written to the contract that Comcast would notify the Town of Fremont if they sold out in either of the other communities, so that a new franchise agreement could be put into effect.

Selectmen again discussed follow-up on to Keith Stanton's presentation from two weeks ago. A return letter has been drafted to him, outlining responses to the issues and suggestions he posed. Selectmen do not want to consider eliminating bulky day at this time, but did outline suggestions to reducing the printed copies of the monthly Newsletter and Annual Town Report; as well as questioning changing the publication of the bi-annual assessing list in the Town Report, all to save money. The Board did not want to reduce the size of the Town Report, and will also consider contacting the PUC on the possible issue of Verizon selling cable services in Fremont.

NEW BUSINESS

1. Selectmen reviewed and approved the accounts payable manifest \$17,576.80 dated for 31 January 2008. Bolduc moved to approve the manifest in the amount of \$17,576.80. Gates seconded and the vote was unanimously approved 3-0.
2. Selectmen discussed the current for trash collection as Carl Hussey has verbally indicated as of this week that he was going to give the Town a 30 day notice that he would no longer be able to collect trash and recyclables in Fremont. There was discussion about putting together an RFP for this work and getting it out as soon as possible. Hussey will be in later in the evening, and more details will be worked out with him at that time.
3. Selectmen signed outgoing correspondence to Keith Stanton in follow-up to his proposal, once it had been reviewed.
4. Selectmen reviewed the folder of incoming correspondence.
5. The public budget hearing is posted to begin with the Town budget on Wednesday February 6, 2008 at 7:30 pm; to be followed by the School budget on Thursday February 7, 2008 at 7:30 pm. The Budget Committee will meet both evenings beginning at 7:00 pm to review any petition warrant articles submitted. The Board of Selectmen have a meeting posted for 7:00 pm on Wednesday February 6, 2008 to review any warrant article petitions or review final budget information as needed.

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6. Board of Selectmen report for the Annual Report has been drafted and was reviewed. Updates will be done and the report reviewed again at Wednesday's meeting next week.

7. Selectmen reviewed Bob Rydeen's poster for Candidates Night. Some changes were made and will be forwarded back to Rydeen for posting.

The Board directed Carlson to follow-up on the tax deed issue of Torromeo and Iacozzi as the full payment was not made by the deadline of January 30, 2008.

Selectmen began reviewing the trash and recycling collection RFP line by line so that it can be prepared in final form as soon as possible and get out to perspective bidders.

Carl Hussey came into the meeting at 7:50 pm for his appointment. Peter Bearse left the meeting at this time.

Hussey said the he did not think he could fulfill his contract with the Town of Fremont for trash and recycling collection. He said physically he is not up for it anymore. Hussey said he has to work hurt a lot, and it is getting to him. He also said that his expenses had gone through the roof, with items costing as much as 100% more than they used to, in terms of maintenance and repairs. Repairs and tires are very expensive and driving to Rochester causes a lot of wear and tear on the trucks.

He said his biggest concern was yesterday. He got a call from one of his trucks yesterday that had broken down and he did not have an empty truck to replace it in the route. The fellows were working on Whittier Drive and a police officer came up behind one of his trucks, and began checking the truck for leaks and such. Hussey said that the truck has leaked, but he does not let it continually drive around that way. He said Al's Automotive and Starkey Welding had done a lot of work on this truck in the last month. He said they do not let it go on and on, they fix one thing and something else breaks. Following this, Highway Enforcement did a thorough inspection of the trucks, and this resulted in further issues.

Hussey said that one of the issues that the Police Chief has gotten after him about has to do with the fact that his drivers do not wear safety vests. Hussey said that he does not believe in safety vests and does not wear them on purpose. He said he teaches his drivers that you always have your own safety and it is your responsibility. You should use your own best safety equipment, your eyes and your brain. He mentioned that Waste Management and Bestway Disposal have had employees killed, and he never has. He said he teaches his drivers to stop when there is no one behind you. He also said you don't have people out there 12 hours a day because it is a tough job and after 8 hours the guy is tired and more likely to get hurt.

Trash was picked up today. There is a section of North Road to be done, and it may be done tomorrow afternoon. Worse case, it will be completed on Saturday morning.

Hussey said he currently has contracts in three towns, Brentwood, Fremont, and Hampton Falls, all very similar in size and population, with Hampton Falls being a little smaller route. He said he has suggested to both other towns that they rebid their contracts for an upcoming three year period.

Hussey said he will work with the Town for whatever time frame is needed to secure a new contract, and that he is not going to give us any less service than we have gotten thus far.

Hussey said that if the police had come to him and told him it was leaking, then he would have explained to the officer what was happening, and that he would get it fixed.

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He said the drivers are supposed to get barrels off the road especially in a snowstorm so that they do not get hit by snowplows.

Hussey talked at length about his trucks, the cost of repairs, and the technology changes over the years.

Hussey said he would like to have something done by April 1, but sooner is alright. He said he will work on it however long it takes for the Town to get another contract in place.

Selectmen thanked him for sticking with us as long as he could, and Hussey said it had been difficult to get to this position and make such a decision. Hussey thanked the Board and he left the meeting at 8:20 pm.

Selectmen reviewed and reworked the letter to Keith Stanton regarding his proposal for funding some of the cable options. The final letter was signed.

NEXT WEEK

The Board will meet on Wednesday February 6, 2008 at 7:00 pm on the main floor of the Town Hall; and the regular weekly meeting will be held on Thursday February 7, 2008 at 6:00 pm in the basement meeting room.

With no further business to come before the Board, motion was made by Bolduc and seconded by Gates to adjourn the meeting at 9:20 pm. The vote was unanimously approved 3-0.

Respectfully submitted,

Heidi Carlson
Town Administrator